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THIRTY HOURS FOR THREE THOUSAND YEARS,

—OR—

HERESY & PLANETS.



COMEDY-DRAMA

IN FIVE ACTS,

—BY—

G. A. KASTELIC.





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CAST OF CHARACTERS:

ALBERT,	-	-	-	-	The Happy Soul.
CHARLEY,	-	-	-	-	- His Cousin.
MABLE,	-	-	-	-	His intended Bride.
MARY,	-	-	-	-	- His Wife
JOHN SMITH,	-	-	-	-	Albert's Father
JESUSITA,	-	-	-	-	Albert's Mother
FELICIA ALVARADO,	-	-	-	-	Mabel's Mother
PALAS,	-	-	-	-	Queen of Venus
XILIOPALKA,	-	-	-	-	Boss of Mercury
JEXIDROL,	-	-	-	-	Giant-Master of Saturn
REGINA,	{	}	-	-	Court Ladies
FELICIA,					
LUCIA,					
NELLIE,	-	-	-	-	The Orphan
EDWARD,	{	}	-	-	Children
EMILY,					
LUDOVINA,					
A PHYSICIAN	-	-	-	-	-

Farmers, Fairies, Dwarfs, Giants. etc., etc.

Time, 1891 to 1901.

Place, Colorado Desert, (Southern California.)



ACT I.

S C E N E I.

Ordinary sitting room, a bed in it. Mabel in a rocker takes a newspaper from the table.

MABEL.—At last I can have a few moments for thinking and reading. I cannot imagine how other girls lounge idly about completely neglecting their house duties. Why, an orderly girl must always be on the alert. I'd never allow my poor mother to burden herself with the work that I am able to do.

Oh! how sincerely I pity Maggie's mother, who allows her daughter to act as she pleases, attending, in her old age even to their support. But the poor old lady will not be spared much longer; ah, then Maggie will find something better to do than read novels or ride down town to meet her admirers.

Even if Henry should marry her, it will little improve her condition as he needs his salary for himself. Alas! she is too young to reason for herself, and will not listen to my well-meant advise.

Salaries are indeed very low, and married women must in some way contribute towards the support of the house while unmarried ones have to battle for themselves. Foolish are but the girls who encourage or marry men who pass most of their leisure time in saloons, and they have but themselves to blame when they find out too late their life's greatest mistake.

For my part, I shall be most careful in this respect, and Albert will find it very hard to convince me that he is becoming a better man, besides, he is unable to keep a steady position. I feel sorry for him; but at the same time I would not sacrifice myself without doing a particle of good to either of us. (*Draws a sigh*) On the other hand, his cousin is a steady worker and very economical, but he has an awful temper. No woman could stand it for any length of time; and I fear serious trouble will some day be the result of his extreme excitability.

Oh! how I do hate fighters, drunkards, gamblers, and the like. Yet, how few are entirely free from such grave faults. The world seems now-a-days all wrong; I wonder if it will continue growing steadily worse, or my after all some great crisis come wringing changes, for the better and cause people to change their morals and customs. Oh! that I knew of some way in which I could myself effect such a transformation, I think I would

gladly devote my life to such a cause. (*Longingly*) I might possibly give up my life, only to change Albert for the better.

Mary enters.

MARY.—Miss Mabel, will you please come and see after the pies?

Exit Mary.

MABEL.—All right, Mary, I will be in the kitchen directly. (*soliloquizing*) So it goes all day long. One can not get a half hour's rest.

Exit Mabel.

Enter Albert, after having repeatedly knocked at the door.

ALBERT.—*No one in.* Miss Mabel is probably in the kitchen. I wonder what she will remark upon seeing me togged out in such fine style? I guess she will hardly recognize me (*smiling into the mirror*) Indeed, I look like a foreign minister, suppose that will fetch her. Of course, I must also give proper explanations. Ah! Here she comes.

Enter Mary.

MARY.—Oh! are you here Albert? Miss Mabel is very busy just now. You may take a chair and wait for her.

Albert, trying to kiss her.

ALBERT.—Pretty little Mary, I hope you will be a charming companion while Mabel keeps me waiting. You know I love you almost as much as I do Miss Mabel.

MARY.—(*coldly*) Perhaps you do, but I do not and never will appreciate your favor. I hardly think Miss Mabel does, either.

ALBERT.—(*perplexed*) How is that? Am I not a nice fellow? Just look at me, Mary.

Mary taking a contemptuous look at him.

MARY.— That hat of yours does not make you a particle better in my estimation. Neither do I think will Mabel be greatly charmed by it.

ALBERT.—(*sharply*) You don't say? Pray, what is it then, that would raise me in yours and your mistress's estimation?

MARY.—(*naturally*) Undoubtedly, if you would call in plain working clothes and prove that you had changed your disorderly mode of living. (*Moves towards the door*). There comes Miss Mabel, so you can settle the question best with herself. Good day, Albert.

Enter Mabel.

MABEL.—Good morning, Albert.

ALBERT.—Good morning, Mabel, my darling, how are you? (*aside*) She does not seem to notice my silk hat at all.

MABEL.—(*coldly*) Thank you I am well. And you?

ALBERT.—(*enthusiastically*) Oh! I am always more than well, when I am permitted to have a talk with you undisturbed, especially to-day.

MABEL.—Why so? Have you any particular news to-day?

ALBERT.—(*amused*) Particular news — she does not seem to "understand." (*strokes his mustache*). (*Aloud*) Well, just take a good look at me. Don't you notice anything particular about me?

MABEL.—You mean that stove-pipe hat you are wearing. That is very little to me, indeed.

ALBERT.—(*with great stress*) Very little! Very little!

MABEL.—(*Interrupting*) Of course, little or nothing. Besides, it is likely some one else's hat, as it seems rather too large for you. Just let me see what's in the hat.

ALBERT.—(*much frightened—In a whisper*) Oh my! She's got me again. I sent to Aunt Smith for cousin's hat.

You know, Mabel, I always buy large hats so as to... to... to...

MABEL.—(*Severely*) to... to.... probably to drive it deeper into your red face when you come tumbling out of some obnoxious saloon, where you are spending half of your worthless life (*sadly*) Oh! Albert, it is awful!

ALBERT.—(*Pleadingly*) Pray, Miss... don't ...

MABEL.—(*Deploringly*) Yes, awful indeed. I know you to be incorrigible. Look, why are you not like your cousin Charley? He is steadily working and saving his dollars, while you.... Oh, how sincerely I pity your poor mother! Your father died worrying about you, and before long you will have driven her too into the cold grave. (*At the last words tears spring to her eyes*).

ALBERT.—(*Moved*) Don't be so hard on me Mabel.... You see I came to tell you that.... that.... that I intend to begin a new life from now on.

MABEL.—It is not the first time you come to tell me that, Albert.

ALBERT.—But it is a fact this time. You see I have secured a nice employment in a commission house, and surely all will turn out for the best. Believe me, dear Mabel.

MABEL.—It is well enough for you to say this, but I can not believe it, until I see that you are beginning to turn over a new leaf, attending properly to business, and placing your earnings in your mother's care, just as Charley does.

ALBERT.—It is always Charley with you. I know you are in love with him, and therefore I am nothing to you.

MABEL.—Well as to that, I must repeat that Charley is

really a very good man, I wish I could say the same of you, but you may rely upon that I am not in love with him, nor with any one else.

ALBERT.—(*Joyfully*) Is that a fact? Oh! may I hope then to....

MABEL.—(*Severely*) Please don't continue — it is useless — it is impossible (*wiping away some tears*)

ALBERT.—(*Excitedly*) Now, there you are again, almost shedding tears. I am sure it is Charley that your heart is crying for.

MABEL.—Don't talk like that any more. You are mistaken, Albert.

Knocks at the door.

MABEL.—Walk right in.

Enter Charley.

CHARLEY.—How do you do, dear Mabel?

ALBERT.—(*aside*) This is fatal! — If he sees his new hat here. Oh! what a foolish prank it was for me to send to Aunt for it. Well, I will have to fight it out if it comes to the point.

CHARLEY.—Hello! Albert, are you here too?

ALBERT.—(*Aside*) Damn him! (*Aloud*) Yes, as you see.

CHARLEY.—(*Addressing Mabel*) I had to visit several offices, concluded business rather early, and thought I would avail myself of the opportunity to call on you and ask whether you would like to accompany my sisters to the opera this evening?

ALBERT.—(*distressfully*) Aha! his sisters.

MABEL.—I hardly think that I shall be able to go. (*ALB. joyfully clapping upon his knees*). You see, I am not feeling quite well, (*ALB. jumping, magnificent*) and would, therefore, prefer to retire early. (*ALB., she is an accomplished angel*). Besides, you know that I never cared much about operas, because I am of the opinion that a good drama is generally more conducive to public refinement, while operas and a number of other fashionable practices and amusements are a sad overdoing.

ALBERT.—(*with emphasis*) Correct, at any rate she seems to know just how to handle fashionable fools like him.

CHARLEY.—Just as you like, Mabel. I am sorry, though I can not help acknowledging your intelligent judgment and preference for the drama.

ALBERT.—(*Aside*) You had better get out of here to avoid a drama.

CHARLEY.—(*Taking up a newspaper*) Have you read that article about the wonderful new desert lake at Salton?

ALBERT.—(*Aside*) I suppose he must feel by this time somehow too salted — perhaps deserted.

MABEL.—Earthquakes have sometimes very strange effects indeed, most likely it will fill up the low plain, though that may take years.

CHARLEY.—If they don't oppose Nature's wise workings the Colorado Desert will, with its surrounding hills, gradually change climate and general aspect, yielding fertile soil for new cultivation to thousands of acres.

ALBERT.—(*lively*) I, myself, would then like to go there and catch rattlesnakes to keep from starving.

MABEL.—(*dreamingly*) California is the most wonderful land on earth.—I declare it is destined to become soon the modern paradise.

CHARLEY.—You are right, Mabel, we have besides strong evidence that many centuries past fertile plains populated by civilized nations existed all over the West, where now but a succession of deserts is met with.

ALBERT.—(*with outstretched arms, sarcastically*) May this unmistakable hint of Nature provoke human intelligence (*aside, especially Charley's*) to bring such conditions speedily back again!

MABEL.—I wish it would although I will not live to see anything like that accomplished. You both may enjoy it yet.

CHARLEY.—(*Taking hold of the plug-hat upon the table astonishingly examines it.*) Ah! what is this?

ALBERT.—(*Aside*) Now the crash is unavoidable. I am sure he carries his pistol. At any rate I must look out for that.

CHARLEY.—(*Uncertain*) It seems... to be... my hat. (*Turns it all over, then tearing out the papers and throwing them into Albert's face.*) Oh! you scoundrel: you miserable thief; you confounded wretch....

ALBERT.—(*interrupting wrathfully*) What's that, you said? I, a scoundrel! a thief! I'll fix you for that. (*Throws away his coat and rolling up his sleeves, advances with clinched fists.*)

CHARLEY.—(*retreatingly shouts*) Stand back there, or I'll smash in your red nose! (*Blows follow.*)

MABEL.—(*Crying*) For God's sake stop, Albert! Don't strike any more! Oh! that I am compelled to witness such ugly fighting!

The fighters fall with a heavy thud in a heap. A moment later a pistol is discharged.

MABEL.—(*Throws one hand up, placing the other over her heart.*) Oh, Lord! This is too much. (*Sinks in a faint on the floor. The fighters jump to their feet.*)

Mabel's mother and Mary rush in.

MOTHER.—(*Despondently*) Oh, Mabel! My dear child, What has happened to you? What is it? Tell me, are you hurt? Who killed you? Tell your Mother!

CHARLEY.—She only fainted upon hearing the accidental shot. I hope it is nothing serious. (*All hands carry her upon the bed.*)

ALBERT.—(*Excitedly*) Mary, bring some water and brandy. Hurry up! Charley, go and call a physician. Run sharp! (*both go confusedly as told.*)

MARY.—(*returning with glass of water and bottle*) Here Albert.—Poor Mabel, she is so kind-natured. Only to see a scuffle is sufficient to kill her.

She sprinkles water on Mabel. Albert rubbing her temples with brandy. Mother assists.

MOTHER.—Dear Mabel, speak but once. Look at your mother! What shall I do for you?

Enter physician and examines Mabel.

PHYSICIAN.—(*pensively*) Poor girl! I fear there remains very little to be done for her.

MOTHER.—Oh, Doctor! Please do all you can, just make her speak to me once more. Is there not a hope for that?

PHYSICIAN.—I may possibly be able to make her rally sufficiently for that. I will try my best, Madam.

He administers to the prostrate form for several minutes.

Madam, she is opening her eyes. Please talk quietly to her for a few moments.

MOTHER.— My sweet daughter, speak to your mother. Tell me, Mabel, how do you feel?

MABEL.—(*smilingly*) Happy, very happy, dear mother, indeed (*she stretches her arm*) Don't worry. Oh! how lovely the angels are singing for me, and how beautiful they are.

Mother, do you see them? There. (*Indicating direction.*)

MOTHER.—I cannot see them, my dear child; no they dare not take you from me yet. I have not petted or cherished you much in all your life, because I meant to spare it until after your training was completed. Now you must remain to be the joy and only consolation of your feeble mother.

MABEL.—Mother, I am thankful you gave me a sensible education and true womanly training. How would I now feel, if I was a spoilt lost child, and having a lost mother. Oh, what horror! only to think of other purblind parents and their un-

fortunate children. I must go and try to help them all, dear mother. (*Feeling about with both hands.*) Where are you Albert?

ALBERT.—Here I am my darling; don't you see me?

MABEL.—No, I can't see; it is getting very dark. But, tell me, will you begin a better life from now on? I always knew that I should have to die before you ever reformed.

ALBERT.—I swear that I will do all in my power. But don't leave us yet; you won't die Mabel. Look at your poor mother; she could never do without you. (*Mother heavily sighing.*)

MABEL.—(*Pleadingly*) Please do not make it harder for me, Albert.

Mother, do not cry. I shall soon meet you up there, where we will be able to do more good than we can here. (*Stretching out both hands.*) Good bye, all! They are calling me. Oh, the beautiful carriage of brilliants! How swiftly they are coming now. (*Head and hands dropping.*)

ALBERT.—One more angel in heaven! This wicked world is no place for souls like hers. (*Curtain*)

S C E N E I I.

CEMETERY.

Albert badly dressed groping over the graves; strikes a match to read inscriptions. His mother and cousin visible in a remote corner.

CHARLEY.—I am sure, Aunt, he contemplates no good at this late hour. I fear gloomy thoughts have brought him out here; therefore it is best to watch him, and I expect you to help me bring your lost son safely home again.

ALBERT.—Here is the place where my dear angel is resting, sweetly dreaming in eternal sleep. Oh, how happy would I be were I a better man! she might then have lived to gladden all her dear ones. I am the one who killed her, and worse of all, I swore to her, that I would reform; but have never tried to do so. On the contrary, I have only kept sinking deeper, with bad companions, until I became actually a thief, a scoundrel and wretched outcast, thrown from employment, avoided by friends who formerly debauched at my account, and given up even by my mother, who, like the majority of senseless mothers do, petted long ago all the good out of my soul, just to gratify her own shallow selfish heart.

I cannot stand it any longer; the best thing for me is to die at once, and have a rest along side of my darling angel here.

MOTHER.—Oh Charley he is really going to kill himself! Please take the pistol from him before he shoots!

For God's sake go and take it from him.

CHARLEY.—Do not be afraid, dear Aunt; I shall see that he will not. As soon as he draws the pistol from his pocket, I will wrench it from his grasp. You may be sure that I did not bring you out here to see your Albert commit the last and gravest act of his wretched existence; on the contrary, to lead him safely back again, and I hope he can be prevailed upon to act reasonable as soon as he becomes aware that you have freely forgiven him.

ALBERT.—Bad company is the ruin of many; no doubt such is the case with me, but after all I have the one consolation that I could never think of any practical way towards reform, without being compelled to put up with despicable hypocrisy (*in a tone of wild bitterness shaking fists*) prayers, bible trash, and other prodigals. Oh! it is bound to drive young and old to excesses and hallucinations, or into the streets and saloons, being irresistably carried off by the natural tide of modern civilization.

If I only knew of a country or state that would offer something better to young folks, I would certainly go there, no matter how far I had to travel; but as yet there is no state, church or community on earth, that may justly claim to propagate a christianity worthy of its name, since all are bound on mechanical imitation, stoutfully keeping up an external deceitful appearance, permanently excluding common sense and rational systems of public education, which only could bring about true feeling amongst all classes. (*Wildly shaking fists*). Iron faced Pharisees with supernatural blood-curdling gravity frighten and drive us for royal legacies, mercilessly into certain despondency.

There is no chance left for unfortunates who are sensible enough to comprehend that none of those flimsy, trumped-up doctrines and petty charities can ever help more than one in a thousand.

I have understood all that long ago; and for that matter even my parents could not have made a good man out of me, though my father has promptly pounded me whenever he felt himself in a fit of wild rage, while mother with her fond caresses and religious training did her part to turn me into a complete savage.

Oh! I am sure, dear Mabel, was the only one who could possibly have brought me to reform. She knew well that religion to self-respect as fashion to education and barbarism to civilization, keep always an even ratio.

Now, it is all too late, sooner or later imprisonment would be my fate. (*Draws out his pistol*) That chance is left but for a

coward. I prefer this remedy. (*Examining the revolver.*) I hope Mabel will be in waiting for me.

MOTHER.—(*Breathlessly*) Now Charley, don't hesitate, or you may be too late.

Charley approaching rapidly raises his arm to give the blow, when Mabel all in white appears, a blue flame illuminating her pale face, and threateningly raising her hands.

MABEL.—Albert, what did you promise me, and swear to, in the hour of my departure.

Albert and Charley drop their arms paralyzed with fear. The pistol falls from Albert's hand upon the grave, while mother is wringing her hands heavenward.

MABEL.—(*Continues*) I came now to warn you for the last time, to start a new and righteous life. Do you expect that by freeing yourself from human duties we would be united. Why, such horrible action as murder or suicide is bound to drive you still further from me. So far, your existence has been absolutely worthless; there being nothing in it to merit even for an instant a communication with any of the glorious souls in after life; consequently you could expect but darkness and desolation. (*Solemn silence*) Oh, Albert! believe me, I have been happy, very happy; but this sad interview will deprive me of felicity for a long time, since in after life, one hour is equal to a thousand years. I made this last sacrifice in order to save you and that you would save others.

ALBERT.—Sublime angel! being myself an outcast, how could I save others? Death only can deliver me.

MABEL.—Know then, Albert, God's infallible scripture and only law is Motion, Progress, Evolution, Perfection; the latter state as the final aim of all has been entirely lost sight of, since soul saving developed into profitable comedy and ecclesiastical farce plays.

Earthly life is a short dream, a mere apprenticeship for the after existence of soul, thus, death can only deliver the good, but never ends suffering for those who have done little or nothing to perfect and ennable their own souls; on the contrary, it increases a thousand-fold, since there is no visible end to it.

Only those who bear patiently all inconvenience, working diligently for their brethren's welfare, helping to establish the anticipated grand civilization of the future, may ever expect that the eternal light will shine also for them. Thus progressive work is the true Saviour, while Christ was one of the greatest teachers, vainly endeavoring to make us all understand that we should willingly sacrifice our own flesh and blood, if necessary to aid helpless sufferers.

Alas! his noble examples have always been misconstrued to become more serviceable for selfish purposes of state-

ly priests.... Brace up, Albert, and make yourself useful. I expect great things of you, and shall not fail to call you as soon as you will have complied satisfactorily with your human duties.

ALBERT.—How gladly will I do as you advise me, my angel, but I do not know how and where to begin. I am deprived of all means, expelled and despised by human society, there is no hope for me.

MABEL.—I am aware that you suffered a great deal, but it is only very little as compared with the awful misery of lost souls. There is hope as long as there is life. Illusory expectations, depravity and licentiousness have certainly landed you at the verge of despondency, as it always does, but the glorious day is now close at hand when you and all the world will be convinced that by harmoniously working together in strict conformity with the plainest laws of Nature, earthly as well as everlasting happiness can best be attained for all and when such will once more be accomplished upon earth, true christianity will exist and a sublime civilization will be established, but never before that. (*Pause.*)

Now as to yourself, I must advise you, Albert, to start with the most natural, and most useful of human occupations, which is agriculture; but never think of beginning it single-handed, as it is frequently attempted with uncertain results. Union and co-operation is necessary for everything; much more so in coaxing off mother earth precious heavenly gifts. If you will explain this to your shiftless comrades, the best of them may readily join you, and all will find, that field work in the lovely open country is not as hard as unsuccessful city life, besides being much healthier for body and soul.

Another very important advice; which I have to offer is, that as soon as the first necessities have been arranged you should take a wife; but select one who would carefully attend to her domestic duties. Your companions will undoubtedly follow your sensible example; and there shall reign the greatest satisfaction amongst all. This being the only desire of our kind Creator. Heaven will be with you, if you follow strictly all I advised you.

I must go, Albert, they are calling me.

Mabel disappears while Albert heavily sighing turns around, and starting at the sight of Charley, exclaims:

ALBERT.—Oh! how true is Mabel's announcement. Tell me, Charley has not sent you our dear angel?

CHARLEY.—Indeed, such is the case, and you see your care-worn mother besides.

The old lady is coming up to clasp her son in her arms.

MOTHER.—Oh! my bad boy, at last you are saved? (*Curtain*)

ACT II.

Ordinary farmer's room, with a low cot in it; one door at each side; window at the right; Mary sitting at the window stringing beans; Nellie on a low stool assisting her.

NELLIE.—(*Orphan*) It will be three months to-morrow since I came here with you. Oh, how quickly the time has passed!

MARY.—I suppose Nellie, you like country life; do you not?

NELLIE.—If I do? Really, I never dreamed to ever feel as happy as I am since I sighted beautiful Merced Farm, at Salton Lake.

MARY.—I am glad you do, my poor child; you have suffered long enough through charitable monsters who cruelly swallow so many defenseless victims, after having pierced their gentle hearts with steel pointed lances of false morals, while they artfully cover their own mean souls with the invulnerable shield of religious piety. You know, dear Nellie, what a fight I had to recover you from their brawny clutches.

NELLIE.—(*weepingly*) Oh, what an awful time I passed at the asylum! The continuous scowls and kicks at my faintest move; disgusting prayers almost every hour! I would rather die than pass another year at that horrid asylum! At last, a kind lady took me away, and I thought better times had come; Instead, I was made to drudge in her luxurious mansion from dawn till midnight. (*Bitterly*) That's what they call a home. And when I ran away, resolved to end my life rather than stand such slavery, I was taken to prison, and there you found and kindly rescued me (*smiles*). Oh, how thankful I am at your unexpected deliverance!

I really felt at first sight, an irresistible attraction towards you Mary, and therefore implored the judge on my knees, to permit me going with you.

MARY.—Luckily, I was able to prove a distant relationship with you; or all your touching appeals would have proved unavailing, and those bright shining stars of petty charity would have had you condemned to three years' imprisonment, forcing you into companionship of vile females until you became of age.

Why, as far as true womanly feeling and human sense is concerned you are of age already, while none of those haughty ladies who were in court trying to ruin your character and

future, will ever be as competent as you are to have a child placed under their charge.

NELLIE.—(*relieved*) It is just lovely among your straight minded friends here, all being so kind and totally different from those I had formerly met! The young folks merrily playing, singing, and courting, but still working industriously like ants; they love all that's cultivating and beautiful, while their highest virtue, is profoundest devotion to one another.

MARY.—For a fact, they do love each other most sincerely and after all, what but such devotion makes life agreeable and is bound to promote all that is noble and grand? It proves to be the case at Merced Farm, where within a few years have sprung up comfortable cottages and spacious out-buildings surrounded by gardens, orchards and vine-yards; in short everything that indicates prosperity and happiness, while but a few years ago we started with almost nothing.

NELLIE.—It is indeed a model farm, stopping here even for a few days imparts feelings of a delightful new life; just to see the great contentment which every one seems possessed of in his daily routine makes one's heart leap with joy and enthusiasm. I wonder if Merced Farm is the only place on earth where the greatest crime ever committed consisted apparently in voluntary overwork?

MARY.—You see, dear child, other people are not content to work happily in union and harmony; they prefer to waste their precious time and energy in creating harassing laws, and unnatural creeds, which force all classes into desperate struggles for brutish supremacy. Until lately men were exclusively engaged in such systematical co-annihilation.

Women and children being now sternly compelled to join those inhuman strifes for dear life,— a horrid state of modernized barbarism is becoming more apparent with every year. Naturally the weak and gentlest are first run over and mercilessly trampled upon; but the strongest are also liable to fall by treachery or sudden mishap, which fact, although being recognized by those in power, they still proceed with unreasonable demands for more souls and victims to gratify their low, vain ambitions.

NELLIE.—(*Mockingly*) Oh, that glorious christianity! Christ would have undoubtedly preferred silence, if He had foreseen such developments; I wonder who deserves the blame for all these contrarities and mockeries. I should think if that question could be answered, it would be easy enough to correct the worst ills.

One thing is sure however, the fault either rests with too wise teachers or their too stupid pupils, and probably with both.

MARY.—I am astonished, Nellie, at your power of reason-

ing. Now, suppose you could ascertain who is to be blamed for all the infelicity on earth, what would you do first?

NELLIE.—I would certainly try to get away from those enemies of humanity, taking with me as many kind and conscientious companions as possible, in order to start with them a happy farm like this is.

MARY.—It would surely be the only correct course to take, my dear; that is just why and how we came to Salton Lake, and converted this place from a barren desert into a garden of Eden.

NELLIE.—Did you not tell me that your husband used to be of very unsteady habits? How then Mary, could you take the risk of coming out here, almost with nothing to start? And how did Albert change so remarkably?

MARY.—You see, it came like this; he was the admirer of my former mistress; but, alas! His abject wickedness broke her heart. (*Sadly*) Poor Mabel, we loved each other as sisters! After she died he became gradually worse, until one night he went to the cemetery resolved to commit suicide, but he did not do it. Next day he came up to me entirely changed. He was very remorseful when he told me of his interview with Mabel, and asked if I was willing to help him do some good work by advice of Mabel.

Of course I consented; that is the way we came here, and I am not sorry for it. Albert from that day has been a good man. He has converted a considerable number of stylish vagrants into useful citizens. Oh, isn't it a marvelous change which has been brought about by the powerful influence of intelligent women—the sweethearts and wives of the undaunted pioneers, and I am sure that if ever this wicked world is to be reformed it will certainly not be done by unsympathising formulas, ostentatious prayers or nerve-trying speeches; but noble self-sacrificing women shall be the great regenerators of the human race.

NELLIE.—I wonder how you managed to keep things agoing at the beginning.

MARY.—To be sure, it was not pleasant at all times; but we placed our hopes upon the fact that united force never fails to produce capital.

With this firm aim our gallant men went heartily to work, building first shanties from brush and clay, ploughing, planting, fencing and road-making followed, and as soon as these first improvements were sufficiently advanced, we hesitated no longer in coming to assist in all we could. We cherished and encouraged, thus kept them always in good spirits, and our farm flourished, while if the men had been left by themselves, they might have become disheartened.

NELLIE.—I can hardly realize how you could manage a farm like this without sufficient capital.

MARY.—Naturally, it could not be done without any means; every man and woman had to put up something for the purchase of implements seeds, provisions, etc. The men even worked in night-shifts, as it required only half the amount of tools; besides they were too anxious to get their prize as soon as possible, (*with a significant air*) and it made them work as if their lives depended on it.

NELLIE.—Surely, such bright prospects must tickle any worthless dude to jump into a pair of overalls and work like a man. (*heartily laughing*). No prudent girl should care for a shiftless individual who is unwilling to build a home for himself. But I would likewise despise a girl who disdainfully refuses to follow her lover into the humblest hut.

MARY.—They must certainly begin as unpretentiously as we did to equal our success, and you see, we have fine buildings, machinery and cattle, besides a small bank account for every child.

But the greatest delight rests with our new family club and school-house, surrounded by spacious playgrounds. All children are sent there as soon as they are able to talk, being well cared for all day long by Florence, Charley's pretty wife, she is actually a second mother to them, and you will, as you know assist her soon, that she may daily rest herself a few hours, to brighten up for our evening lectures and social entertainments, of which she is an acknowledged leader. Indeed, our men are always enthusiastic over her, while the neighboring Indians call her admiringly “La Luz del Alba”.

NELLIE.—Truly, Florence is very charming and refined; I shall be happy to become soon of some service to her.—I wonder whether she has ever done any rough farm work?

MARY.—Certainly, she walked behind the cultivator, singing and chatting with her fellow workers, which she would do as cheerfully to-day had we no children to take care of. (*Pointing out of the window*) You see most of the timber planting up in the hills was done by her; besides, in harvest time all hands are engaged, each playfully vying to excel the other. Now it is not far off when you may see for yourself, and I am sure that if ever you feel then sorry for anything in the world, it will be for the millions who never had a taste of such real happiness as our rural life offers to congenial brethren. You will also agree with us, that even a millionaire could not enjoy himself better than we do.

NELLIE.—I believe you Mary, no work can become unpleasant the way it is done here, where all goes like play. For a fact, life on Merced Farm seems to be a continuous pic-nic,

while city life offers pitiful sights; even well-to-do business men, rushing madly about for gain and in search of nerve-shattering pleasures are worse off than the lowest worms and creeping insects of our garden hot-beds (*school-tower clock strikes three*).

NELLIE.—Three o' clock, and the Yuma train has not passed yet.

The train's rumbling noise is just heard passing. Nellie arises from her stool and opens the window waving childishly her handkerchief at the train. Barking of dogs; bellowing of cattle.

I love to see the cars. (*with some excitement*) Ah, there is Mamie coming! It is feeding time!

Faint singing is heard, becoming more pronounced, and soon dies out again; Nellie closing window resumes her seat.

How happy they always are!

MARY.—Such is our first principle and there can be no mistake about it; human beings should not work like slaves, but in a cheerful and contented manner, assigning, whenever possible, to man and woman an equal share; thus inspiring all with noble zeal and ambition, which effectually excludes baseness and jealousy.

NELLIE.—(*With conviction*) There, you have struck the most delicate question Mary; jealousy is what puzzles townspeople so much, that a great many go wild over it. Suppose Albert should fancy me or any other girl, (*Teazingly*) how would you act about it?

MARY—(*Quietly*). Very easily, indeed; you know morals on Merced Farm are highly advanced as compared with those of other good Christians, who are snarling and snapping, vitriolling, and killing each other.—Albert would without delay tell me of his heart's freaks, and I should certainly send him to you that you may decide, whether his passion is to be punished or rewarded.

NELLIE.—(*Shaking her finger in derision*) I doubt it; I doubt it.

MARY.—(*Good naturally*). Why should you? I think, Albert could acquire in your company only grace and nobility of character; but however it may be, never could there arise ill feeling among us, on account of any unavoidable misunderstandings; to the contrary, such generally strengthens true sympathy and devotion between the parties concerned. Thus you see, all motive for mental depression, deceit and jealousy has successfully been abolished from Merced Farm.

NELLIE.—Indeed your statute rules are very wise to allow angelic women to break men's degrading and dangerous passions with unbounded kindness, whereas centuries of experience prove, that after the early dreams of childhood human nature

cannot be modelled by any amount of forcible restrictions, and moral progress must be sought without insanely denouncing the most inexorable laws of nature.

MARY.—We found the golden road that leads into every one's heart, while it is as clear as sunlight that our great Master meant with His supreme doctrine of love, no mystery, conventional absurdity, or fraudulent complication. We are practicing the same at Merced Farm to the best of our ability, never dreaming to have stubborn, smooth-tongued ministers stunt our natural righteousness and common sense.

NELLIE.—I really cannot understand, how in this enlightened age, religious creeds and love are merely valued as marketable conveniences, regardless of genuineness and unmindfull of its deplorable consequences.

MARY.—Still, those noisy moral fiends wonder why millions drink their troubled minds into forgetfulness, insanity, crime, and perdition, while charitable Christians notice only, that prisons and asylums are steadily getting to narrow, and they keep on crying for more, when with some true sense of brotherly love useful citizens could be made of all, with but a small additional expense.

NELLIE.—(*Fixing her eyes in great surprise upon opposite door, and pointing to it.*) How is it Mary, that I saw Albert there in the doorway? Could he have entered without being seen, or did he crawl through the other porch window to overhear our conversation?

MARY.—(*With a frightened look, but calmly.*) You must be mistaken Nellie, Albert and Charley went into the hills at four o'clock this morning to investigate some mines which they imagine to have discovered. They will hardly return before dark, as they took lunch with them, besides, eavesdropping is never done on our farm; there would be no motive for it, as we are always truthful and open-hearted towards each other; if townfolks could ever get used to that, detectives, police, auctioneers, saloon autocrats and numberless hitherto unproductive professionals would somewhat change their position, towards downtrodden humanity, and become actual benefactors of the surging masses. Even physicians would find a more useful field for their science and knowledge.

NELLIE.—Do you mean then, Mary, that people would not get sick?

MARY.—Indeed they wouldn't; physicians ought not to be in waiting for a call to the side of some unfortunate. It is just as contrary as are those numberless idly watching ministers, while millions go to their certain ruin, and thus it will continue as long as soul and life saving is being carried on hand in hand with arrogance and ignorance.

NELLIE.—But what else could they do, Mary?

MARY.—Knowledge and prevention is better than cure, and of course, profitable to all parties. On Merced Farm, we have neither physician nor preacher, but if it should become necessary to employ them, strictest attention to their duty, would be our principal claim. We would oblige the former to give us, and especially, to our children regular hygienic instructions, directing the preparation of meals, amount of work and exhilaration, social plays, general movements and gymnastic exercises,—in short everything that goes to preserve health and comfort of body, while the spiritual adviser would give us interesting and scientific lectures, such as intelligent persons daily require; above all, he should sternly censure public outragers, and see that our little ones are constantly warned against bad habits, religious superstition, and downright hypocrisy; the very root of all human monstruosity.

NELLIE.—“Why, this is exactly the opposite of what we were taught at the orphan asylum!”

MARY. — Most assuredly , not only contrary to asylum teaching, but different from the unsystematized mock-education as is customary throughout the civilized world. (*Stress*). Now, we don't propose to raise modernized savages as others do, for the mere imitation sake, and you have seen how bright and well behaved our children are under the sensible treatment of strict parents as well as under the careful training of mother Florence. Thus, our children will undoubtedly improve future generations as far as ethics and sound principles are concerned.

NELLIE.—(*Sighing*) Ah, how I do admire Florence! It makes me sad to think of not having had the fortune to receive in time such necessary teachings and sublime training. (*Hopefully*) How happy would I be to assist her, while with my former mistress I was obliged to trod, behind her haughty girls with an armful of books such as astronomy, mathematics, electricity and the like of heavy trash; the more they knew the more brutal they became and the less human sense they retained!

MARY.—Those giddy town--folks never think of giving their children a fair chance; instead of that, they fill their tender brains with cold science, pagan religion, or fashionable tricks of some sort, however it rarely occurs to them that first of all, good behavior to parents and fellow beings is most essential, while love for nature's beauties is next to be cultivated in every young heart.

NELLIE.—(*Jumps up with a cry of terror; pointing at opposite door*). For heavens sake, Mary, look there! Do you see him?

MARY.—(*Drops the basket with beans in turning sharply around; dumbfounded*) Oh! God! Albert, what has happened? Why did you return so unexpectedly? (*Jumping up with outstretched arms and*

a cry of horror) What is it? Tell me; what on earth makes you look so pale? (*Mary covering her face with apron sinks back into chair quietly sobbing*) Oh, my! oh, my!

NELLIE.—(*With frightened gesture*) Awfully strange — his disappearing without answering a word!

MARY.—Dear Nellie, you don't know, but I am sure something terrible must have happened to Albert! — His mysterious apparition is a warning omen.

NELLIE.—Why do you think so, Mary?

MARY.—(*Calmly*) He remarked on awakening, this morning, that it was just ten years, since his memorable interview with Mabel took place.

NELLIE.—Don't torment yourself Mary, with unfounded anxiety ; it is getting dark and they must be home in a few minutes anyway.

MARY.—(*Restlessly walking the floor*) I wish the children would come that we might send...*(stepping to the window relieved)* Ah, there is Charlie! He is running, and yonder by those fig-trees a group of men approaching (*excitedly*) Nellie, Nellie! They are carrying something... It is my Albert! — It must be him! (*She sinks despondently in a chair*) Oh, why did I let him go? It is my fault my stupid indifference, I could have averted the accident. (*Weeping softly*).

NELLIE.—(*Consolingly*) Don't be so hard on yourself — there is no accident yet that we know of.

MARY.—I am too sure there is; (*Getting up with firmness and resolution*) I must not however give way to grief; it is against our rules and human reason; we are all supposed to bear bravely whatever falls to our lot.

CHARLEY.

Stumbling in, breathlessly sinks into a chair. Red flannel shirt, white overalls, blue scarf, farmer's straw hat with green ribbon.

MARY.—(*Beseechingly stepping to his side*) Tell me, what has happened to him, Charley?

CHARLEY.—(*Astonished*) How on earth do you know anything happened? Was Mabel also here looking for him?

MARY.—(*Sharply*) What did you say? Mabel... Ma...bel (*incoherently stammering*) loo...king for him..? Oh, God, then he is gone forever!.. She has taken my Albert!

CHARLEY.—No, she has not. (*Mary looking up surprised*). She only called him, as I understand.

MARY.—Called him? (*vehemently*) He is then alive? Why are you frightening me so cruelly, Charley? (*Placing her hands upon her heart*).

CHARLEY.—(*Earnestly*) Sit down Mary, and compose yourself... We must take things as they come,—Albert lives; he will probably be all right again by to-morrow morning.—In fact, he is now only suffering from the effects of the great quantity of whiskey which we made him swallow a little while ago.

MARY.—(*Indignantly*) For God's sake! Have you turned mad Charley? How dare you do such a thing? Do you mean to make him a tough again, such as he used to be years ago when I despised him?

NELLIE.—(*Modestly*) No, Mary, I think, Charley meant good by him—Was not Albert bitten by a reptile, Charley?

CHARLEY.—You have it Nellie, a large rattler bit him.

MARY.—(*Raising her arms*) Gracious! How did that happen? Pray, tell me all about it, and make it short, Charley!

CHARLEY.—(*Gets up, Nellie sitting*). It came like this:—"In crossing the second canyon we heard a most pitiful cry, resembling a girl's moaning in great distress." It startled us, causing me to fall into the creek, while Albert with three jumps reached the old Spruce stump at the other side, where he stopped with transfixed eyes to embrace some imaginary object on top of the old stump. But oh, horrors! I also perceived at the same instant a huge snake angrily shaking its tail while Albert, unmindful of his dangerous position slowly exclaimed: "Oh, Mabel! I did hear your call last night, and am ready to follow you. "At that moment I shouted a sharp cry of warning,—it was too late.—Albert fell exhausted to the ground, after the ugly snake struck him, and just when I reached the spot with a big boulder to dispatch the reptile, it had disappeared. Then, without losing time, I ran to the old Mexican's cabin, to ask for help; and when we got back again, we poured about two pints of whiskey down Albert's throat. Of course that made him unconscious, but he will soon recover. At last, they are bringing him hither!

Men enter with the prostrate form. All in farmers costume, like Charley's. Mary assists in laying the body on the cot; then placing her hand upon his forehead.

MARY.—(*Shaking her head*). Oh, my poor Albert!—He is quite cold,—he will not live Charley, just examine his pulse; there is no noticeable beating. (*Children's singing is heard outside.*) The poor children are now merrily coming home to find their share of life's sorrow just beginning. (*Charlie examines Albert's heart.*)

Emily nine, and Edward seven years old; both enter eager and happy hesitatingly kissing their mother and Nellie.

EMILY.—Dear mamma; are you crying? Why is papa so pale? (*Glancing in a terrified way all around.*)

CHARLEY.—The heart's action has stopped.—His duty was over, and Mabel called him.

MARY.—(*Solemnly taking the children to the bedside.*) May such be her will;—she saved him, and she called him. Children, kiss your father good bye; he is gone forever!

TABLEAU.

More farmers are filing in, leading their wives and children. Emily and Edward kneel down to kiss the prostrate form. Women's regulation farm costume:—gray brightened with cardinal colored ribbons; girls, light blue and pink. Children's pink and white, all with flowers in their hair; boys' white and blue, leading each a girl, form the first circle around the afflicted group at the bedside. The back wall being shifted discloses the elegant farm on the shores of Salton Lake. A group of Indians and Mexicans solemnly approaching. Two miniature trains are seen crossing, accompanied with its accustomed rumbling. Barking of dogs, neighing and bellowing of distant cattle. Grand illumination, while on the hilltops, Mabel is seen mounted on a ponderous dragoon, sword in her right, assists with her left Albert to mount. His hair and flannel shirt now glistens with tinsel. They are both rising upon a cloud and powerful trumpeting is heard. Mabel's costume: light blue riding skirt with silver stars and gold trimmed; bodice and sleeves of purple velvet with rich embroidery; tastefully jewelled crown, and flowing from it a white lace veiling; gold trimmed silver wings, glass beads and tinsel.

(*Planet curtain.*)



ACT III.

SCENE I.

ENCHANTING SEASHORE LANDSCAPE IN VENUS.

Pyramidal floral hill visible through transparent cascades, forms background; lyre shaped trees bearing beautifully hued flowers, diamonds feathers, golden and silver fruits, etc. To the left a crystal pavilion with throne, upon which a queen in full state, surrounded by court ladies is seated. In front some thirty genii and fairies singing the welcome of Venus. "El Biendo a Venus", while dancing around the tastefully decorated silk ribbon pole. Supported by the stout ribbons, they turn occasionally complete somersaults. On the right, Albert upon yellow velvet divan, just awakening, supports his head by leaning it on his arm; he watches in a dazed manner the conclusion of this strange spectacle, while Mabel from behind fans him. Fairies separate into social groups.

ALBERT.—How beautiful! How sweet! Where am I? It looks as if I were in heaven... and you with me, angel Mabel? Won't you please tell me how and when did I come here?

MABEL.—You have been travelling on horseback with me for fifty years. (*Albert jumps up.*) Yes Albert, for fully fifty years, that need not frighten you. The earth is rather far off; however our journey passed like a dream, since time counts as nothing here; I hope you will soon become accustomed to it.

ALBERT.—But tell me, sweet Angel, where are we, and who are those beautiful beings over there? Is that not the Queen in the center?

MABEL.—Truly, so you may call her; she is the Queen of Love, the Queen of Venus. It's in this magnificent planet that we are at the present.

ALBERT.—It seems, that the enchanting fairies around here are waiting for us. The Queen is now beckoning to you. Oh, what kind expression is on her face!.. What a glorious world this is!.. I certainly have a great desire to hear what they have to say.

Both advancing towards the throne are greeted with low bows by the sweetly smiling fairies.

MABEL.—(*Introducing*) Queen Palas of Venus! This brother of ours was lost. I succeeded in saving him while he has sincerely been doing his part;—receive him according to merits.

QUEEN.—(*Raising her right hand*) Albert, happy soul! Heaven has assisted you to save yourself and others. We offer you a hearty welcome to this loveliest of all planets, the celebrated

morning star, where all good souls are received for promotion to guardian angels, gaining here strength and power to conquer the evils of ill-guided humanity.

She arises and kisses him on cheek, covering his shoulders with her regal purple cloak and decorates his head with her crown; attendants giving her another crown and cloak; electric light raised on to the group.

You are now decorated Prince of Venus; all upon this planet is at your command. Sisters, honor him; bestow love and devotion by singing, playing and instructing him; let the fair prince see all the charms of this paradise, — the lovely gardens with speaking flowers, the sea of silver, fountains of gold, trees of diamonds, seraphins and fairies floating through air and water, dwarfs and giants in caverns and volcanos; all and everything he must see and know. Let Jupiter be merciful unto him!

MABEL.—First receive the kiss of welcome from your sisters; such being the custom in this land of happiness, the poetical eve' and morning star. I loved you dearly, and felt therefore happier in giving up my life to let Mary see after your comforts, while I, assisted by all Venus' angels attended to your soul's wants. (*Kisses him.*)

ALBERT.—(*enraptured*) What grand example for earth's jealous denizens! If unfortunate mortals could but unite to act loving and conscientiously as is done here, would not the earth be a paradise equal to Venus?

REGINA.—Albert my happy brother! All human beings have as long as is practicable and possible several angels leading, working and protecting them. Were it not for this, most would by natural causes get killed or maimed before maturity. Every mother is aware of her darling's guardian, and so I was listening in the cemetery to your self-reproaches; I understood your deep sorrow and advanced spirit, subsequently I recognized that unlimited benefits could be done through the nobility of your heart. You only needed encouragement, and opportunity to reform; accordingly, in order not to frighten you, Mabel was detailed to communicate with you; now you are nearly past all trouble. I shall always remain your devoted sister Regina (*kisses him.*)

ALBERT.—Regina, my dear sister! Did you then know that I was to be here some day, saved and happy?

FELICIA.—We always know what is going on upon earth, and help first those who by strong experience, and personal humiliation become fitted to receive heavenly revelations. We teach them to utilize the great forces of nature, which in time will yield to men their most hidden secrets, but could not have been wholly discovered as long as human intelligence remained

obscured by moral, national, religious, mercenary and other fanaticism.

Those indestructible social parasites keep constantly covered the entire ground, suffocating and crippling our tender plants almost before they are well started. 888 Thousand million Venus souls are untiringly engaged upon earth, showing to ill-guided humanity how essential it is to completely destroy the hitherto unchecked growth of parasites.

Some sensible and conscientious gardeners have actually made faint attempts to do so; but they were unluckily persuaded by unscrupulous parasite-feeders, that the barren ground would present too desolate an appearance; thus no serious efforts were made to quench this overwhelming evil. (*solemnly*) Albert! You are one of the first who heeded our well meant advise; you not only destroyed all creeping things that were in your reach, but you put most valuable new seeds into the soil, and as astonishing results were almost instantaneous; other celebrated gardeners came along to see... they are now only beginning to see, their intentions are honest, they mean business and ere long the great cry will echo from land to land for more fresh air and clean seeds; then sure enough all hands will gladly take hold of the powerful cultivator; — the world will be saved once more and starving humanity shall have a fair chance to harvest rich crops at the next season. Saved souls will again be permitted to enter triumphantly in Venus, receive therefore the kiss of welcome from your sister Felicia. (*kissing him*).

ALBERT.—Indeed, those clumsy rotten logs of dogmas, having been piled up for centuries, are now hurriedly finishing up the grand stake; no more to destroy heresies, but to illuminate with its fires the gloom of orthodoxy and to fertilize with its ashes all unbroken ground. —How I wish for a glimpse of my home at Salton Lake!

LUCIA.—Do not worry about earthly memories, my brother; —all of your friends are well, although they must, as you did, bear their share of human suffering and toil which tends to cultivate soul, making it susceptible for real earthly, as well as everlasting happiness.—You will soon be united again with all your dear ones. Take my kiss of welcome, (*Kissing him*) and this celestial mirror by which you may see some earthly scenes.

Lights low; faint organ sounds. She rapidly revolves the mirror, turning Albert in a position to face the audience; places the triangular glittering hand-mirror point upwards into his left hand, and retires. Meanwhile all decorations being removed, a few fairies remain in the rear.

ALBERT.—(*Placing one hand upon temple*) Is it possible! Can all what I see exist? It looks like a road made of cobwebs, extending from earth to Venus.

FAIRIES.—(*in chorus from above and below ground.*) The very road you came, happy brother!

QUEEN.—Yes, my dear, you came that silvery road; it starts from the North pole, and as you see, is rocked by the rapid motions of Earth and Venus.

ALBERT.—Indeed, it is rising and falling like large ocean waves, and what beauty! The road is full of fairies, greeting each other smilingly in their lofty flights, some of them mounted upon fire spouting horse-dragoons. (*Organ sounds increase while fairies are responding.*)

FAIRIES.—(*in chorus.*) The horses of Hestia! The horses of Hestia, happy brother!

ALBERT.—They are bringing earthly wanderers.

FAIRIES.—(*as before.*) Saved souls, noble souls, like you, dear brother!

ALBERT.—How nicely one can distinguish the earth!—It looks like a luminous metal globe; I can now see quite plainly our country.

All the described scenes appearing at this instant upon the curtain in the rear of stage, while the locations of New York and Salton Lake in Southern California are marked by green stars.

ALBERT.—(*In extacy.*) Lucia, dear sister! This sight alone is worth ten good lives upon earth.

SCENE II.

MABEL.

Stepping up takes the mirror from Albert and after revolving it rapidly, returns it to him.

Now, look again, but don't get frightened! No soul is so perfect as not to require some purification and humiliation.

Scene upon curtain vanishes; Albert looking at mirror with expression of deep horror.

ALBERT.—Oh, too terrible: a continuous mass of humanity dropping from earth; there must be thousands, and such a terrific plunge; men, women and children of all classes!—Laborers, soldiers, capitalists, priests and ministers, murderers and deceivers, all alike anticipating now only the result of the fearful fall into space;—they are falling, still falling!

FAIRIES.—(*Aloud.*) The fall of lost, mean souls, over 3000 every hour. (*Scene as described appears upon curtain.*)

HORRIBLE WHIRLING IN JUPITER:

starts with lightning and thunderbolts. Human beings dropping in a heap are then flung about; cries of terror and anguish. Dense sandstorm swallows Albert, fairies, and darkens everything. Finally grinding motion of Jupiters revolving belts, every other band moving in counter-direction; gradually clearing up again with fine sand rain, discloses

SCENE III.

MERCURY GROTTO.

Rough cliffs shining in all bronze colorings, overgrown with large bronze coral trees, bearing diamonds; gold and silver rains and springs from crevices.

ALBERT.—(*dazed and maimed picks himself up.*) Gracious! What a horrible experience that was! (*Court ladies appearing one by one from crevices.*) Those thundering clouds of sand and dust, heated by the terrific whirling motion; such awful grinding of the cruel relentless belts of God knows what an unearthly substance. (*A shoulder runs through his frame.*) Br...rr...rr...rr...r, br...rr...rr...rr...r, the penetrating cries of men, women, and children, and then all became dark... pitch dark. I never knew whether I was standing upon my feet or upon my head. In my last glimpse I saw thousands of unfortunates disappearing into a rapidly revolving funnel, (*sorrowfully*) and the despairing looks of friends and relatives!

How many souls are thus devoured in great Jupiter? No wonder its volume equals 1,400 times that of the earth! (*he observes Mabel.*)

MABEL.—(*Unconcernedly*) Here we are again sound and safe my Prince, but you look very much frightened indeed!

ALBERT.—(*Relieved.*) I should think it was enough to frighten anybody; nay to punish even the hardest sinner.

QUEEN.—Great Jupiter's lesson of universal motion serves to arouse transitory idlers to full realization. Every soul has to suffer it. You got off easy and should not worry, since you had the rare privilege to remain upon the fifty thousand kilometers floating observatory, where all who practically served their fellow beings are received.

ALBERT.—Luckily it lasted only for a few moments (*Fairies laugh*).

REGINA.—So it may appear to you, my brother; but it is a long time since you left V'rus.

FELICIA.—Yes, indeed; the distance between Venus and Jupiter is over 700,000,000 kilometers.

LUCIA.—And you have been in great Jupiter's embrace over a century, the ejection from there being effected by centripetal force, depends entirely upon the soul's gravity; thus, you see, all judgment is accomplished automatically, with infinite precision and absolute impartiality. There is no vengeful deity, inequitable judge, immature law - imposters, corruptive jurors, or any such human vagaries in all God's realms.

ALBERT.—Another merciful providence of nature in this wise creation! How wonderful is the world! Mortals have no conception of its greatness; they know nothing beyond the earth with its surging mass of detestable slave-traders and professional soul-killers, few of whom ever stop to reason about the probable use of so many stars and planets.

MABEL.—You are right brother, not one of those heavenly bodies exist's simply to decorate the dark skies, but to afford shelter for creatures of varying nature and peculiarities.

ALBERT.—(*looking shyly about*) I'd like to know on what planet we are now? I see no sign of life, all being lava, rock and metals, and what an intense heat! I'd take it for Mercury.

(Clattering resounds throughout the grotto; little fellows with rotund bodies appear high and low through crevices, finally congregating, sing the Queen's refrain, falling upon their knees and touching the ground with their foreheads whenever the word "Palas" is pronounced the third time; suddenly a boulder moves rattling sideways and Xyliopalka hobbles up from below, heavily treading and blowing searches nervously about; finally stops before the queen with a low bow.

Dwarfs costume: large double pointed iron sandals, red flannel trousers, canary colored shirts, large blue whiskers, beards and hair of same color reaching almost to the ground; donkey's ears, gilded eagle's claws and beaks, red faces, green spectacle-frames with diamonds in centre, horses tails. Boss Xyliopalka little taller, uglier, and more rotund, immense cone-shaped log of gold in right hand.

XYLIOPALKA.—My workers are always happy to do whatever Queen Palas of Venus demands. What is your desire?

QUEEN.—Let the little subjects rest, Boss ; my Prince will take great delight in seeing them joyful.

Dwarfs clapping hands jump dexterously according to Xyliopalka's time strokes.

ALBERT.—Well done, Boss of Mercury, you keep your little folks in admirable discipline, while scientific men on earth believe Mercury to be uninhabitable.

XYLIOPALKA.—(*indignantly*) Your self-complacent scientific men know far less than my little workers do. In fact, human beings are extremely conceited, stubborn and ignorant; not so much on account of a defective constitution, as for the complete want of such physical and mental training which is necessary to comprehend and appreciate the sublime laws of

creation, as they are found engraved upon every page in the open book of nature. (*Xyliopalka snorts wildly.*)

Men should unite; every one contributing his best, instead of basely speculating to get the best of his fellow-beings. What could we Mercurians do, were each to imagine himself superior and justified in arrogantly compelling others to gather the blossoms and fruits of labor without an equal return?

ALBERT.—Really, there seems to be great contentment among your liliputian subjects.—What is their chief occupation?

XYLIOPALKA.—We have certainly no such comfortable planet as earth's ungrateful mortals; but we do know that only by good will, and strict co-operation the grandest results may be attained. It is quite certain that if human beings would work unitedly as inferior Mercurians do, they would be able to perform equally great feats with less difficulty. It is 800,000,000 years since we began breaking rocks and boulders from the sun to build Mercury with, and we expect soon to turn the hitherto dark hemisphere towards the all invigorating rays; but you see, it will still require many centuries of combined efforts, until we can enjoy organic life, such as is possible in more advanced planets. (*Hoarsely laughing*) What a pity it is for beautiful mother earth to have her carry such silly children, who believe in a fictitious god, to create within 6 days a world with all in and upon it.

ALBERT.—Say, Boss Xyliopalka, have any of your subjects previously worked, in other planets?

XYLIOPALKA.—A great many of them; there are millions in all parts of the great universe constantly busy in breaking down and constructing stars, comets, and planets; they perform their duties with great ability, and by availing themselves of the most powerful combinations of nature's forces, all work is securely and quickly accomplished. (*Hoarsely laughs.*) What a fun it was to watch deceitful, helpless mortals at their Panama ditch! Ha ha child's play! If they would only go about it with the earnest zeal, as some ancient nations did at their grand monumental constructions thousands of years ago.

Why, that very Isthmus has been built by gigantic men for similar purposes as railway surveys are now progressing in that same region!

Heavy rumbling, thunder and lightning; immense boulder about 10 feet high loosening itself, moves rapidly towards centre of stage; half a dozen dwarfs vehemently pushing it behind, occasionally falling one of them full length face downwards. Some smaller boulders being pushed by one or two wildly laughing and gesticulating fellows; others motionless

ALBERT.—(*Startled*) An earthquake! an earthquake!

XYLIOPALKA.—A mercury quake, or whatever you may be pleased to call it. They simply wish to give you an idea with what facility and enthusiasm they can bring life into rock and metal.

ALBERT.—(*Surprisedly*) Indeed, they do! I wonder where these chaps come from! They do not seem to have been born in Mercury.

XYLIOPALKA.—Quite true, there is as yet no place in our planet to hatch anything. All came from the earth after they passed the jurisdiction of great Jupiter, and here they remain until they have finished their job of building their own paradise.

ALBERT.—They are here then under sentence to hard labor, as I understand.

XYLIOPALKA.—Very much like that; at any rate, they must first learn that gold and precious stones are not to be coveted, but instead, union, peace, and progress. (*Solemnly*) Mercurians have been without exception, insane money fiends, misers, power abusing ambitious leaders, and the like; having however committed no other serious offense, they were leniently thrown here among precious metals and glistening gems, where they would get a fair chance to acquire due appreciation of all what they despised so stubbornly in their earthly career.

No green fields, shining waters, blue skies, gentle animals or any of earth's beautiful creations are here to gladden the hearts of gloomy Mercurians. No, not for thousands of tons of gold! Why, they would be ready to lift the whole planet itself into the sun, if they dared to express their sentiments to lovely fellow-beings, but, alas, alas! There is no hope for such happiness until Mercury will be advanced like Venus which requires many centuries more of hard labor.

ALBERT.—Is it possible Boss, are there no women amongst them?

XYLIOPALKA.—(*contemptuously*) Hi, hi; women! Half of my chaps have been capricious belles, idly dragging wives, or prosperous widows; all scornfully pushing aside less fortunate fellow-beings. Jupiter never recognized their earthly supremacy; thus here they are, worrying for having forfeited the identity even of their sex. They rightly deserve this punishment, for woman without a womanly heart has no right to be a woman.

Work is wholesome for them; treasures is what they were after.—Here they have found both plentifully.

Dwarfs kissing ground burst into stifled wailing.

ALBERT.—How wise is Nature's own sentence in giving every soul a chance to find what best suits!

MABEL.—Inexhorrible boss! We have heard in your dominions much that is of interest, and would like to have the Prince see your subjects at their usual occupation. Please give the starting signal, and order a fast comet Cyclodron to be made, upon which we shall continue our journey after visiting the caverns of diamonds and crystal.

Xyliopalka knocks with gold bar, dwarfs begin hand clapping and jump crying: "Chiquiriticos, chiquiriticos, chiquiriticos," then busying themselves with heavy gold chains, pincers, etc.; white fires start as if by magic, hissing of steam, heavy strokes from deep under and above ground; boulders move; principle furnace forms an immense woman's head; dwarfs sitting alternately upon a shovel, sliding in front of the furnace's mouth, jump into the fire, causing the flames to shoot up forming the horrible furnace's head dress. Albert, horrified calls attention to it, while Xyliopalka dances with delight; at this the visitors leave, soon returning from the other side, when an awful peal of thunder followed by a rattling, hissing, combination of sounds startles Albert; next moment the finished comet drops to his feet all ablaze; dwarfs clap hands and dance.

XYLIOPALKA.—(*Bowing*) Palas, Palas! Queen of Venus! Here you have the fastest comet that has ever passed the heavens; 500,000 dwarfs have been constructing and equipping it for over a century, they wish the kind Queen to remember them.

Albert mounts first, then Queen and others; comet begins to glow, and starts with uplifted nose and revolving his arms steamingly upwards amid enthusiastic applause of dwarfs who lift the big boulder high into the air.

(*Planet curtain.*)



ACT IV.

SCENE I.

IN SATURN'S ATMOSPHERE.

Burning and hissing comet head foremost strikes the ground with raised arm enveloping itself completely into a dense cloud of blue steam, and disappears; disclosing the entire party after steam cleared away; scene foggy dark space; stage floor convexed slightly upwards, tinted greenish blue.

ALBERT.—(*Confused*) What a lengthy flight that was to silent Saturn, over thirteen hundred million kilometers, with only a short stop at planet Mars! Well, all went smoothly, while we had a jolly time with the red headed fighters over there. What a great blessing would it be, if they could preserve peace! But they must unceasingly tug at, and trash each other, as this seems to be the only way by which they can keep warm, whereas on earth they were unable to keep cool.

MABEL.—Do you remember, brother, what comet Hyperbolicon said when we met him on his heavenly mission near Mars?

ALBERT.—Yes, I do, he told us that we have to get first accustomed to saturns atmosphere before we could see anything, and that the inhabitants are frequently absent, taking flights to their satellites or the musical ring.

QUEEN.—Then, let us sit down and await developments.

The first greenish satellite appears about three feet in diameter.

REGINA.—Now, look there!

LUCIA.—How pretty? That is Titan, the great satellite, from which they adjust and regulate high power magnetic currents of all visible planets.

FELICIA.—When will ossified mortals fully appreciate the fact that invisible induction-coils keep them agoing and thinking, brings life into seeds and ripens their favorite fruits?

QUEEN.—Why, every animal on earth knows this simple law of nature and lives devotedly in accordance with it; insensate man however to his own detriment imagines to be entitled to a special reward for opposing the divine laws at every step and turn.

MABEL.—We came just in time to see the immense tower with its magnetophone, where the sonorous voices are kept.

A shadow resembling Eiffel Tower is becoming visible all over the Moon's face.

LUCIA.—Now, attention! We will get the latest news from the darkest far beyond spheres, where personally we could not go.

Harmonious gong sounds, thence a tremendous voice from above by using a speaking tube.

VOICE.—Comet Venganza collided with the green sun, producing an impressive celestial blaze which illuminated Planet Milliolique so brilliantly, that seraphs and archangels assembled in a spheric dance, inviting genii and fairies from neighboring planets to join. All were so highly charmed, that it was decided not to interfere for 30,000,000 years with the green Sun's glistening. (*described scene appears upon rear curtain*).

MABEL.—What a pity it is, that we cannot see any of this brightness, as it will take at the least, 500,000 years until the rays of the green light will have penetrated the immense distance!

QUEEN.—(*Addressing Albert.*) Yes, my dear! Heaven is a long way off, and certainly not so easily reached as ministers are trying to make their unsuspecting disciples believe, while they themselves will find it extremely difficult to get there.

VOICE.—(*from above.*) Volcanos and comets of that entire system contributed to this splendor by emitting precious stones of all colors and sizes. There was for almost three thousand years no such rejoicing in the heavens, being now held to celebrate the latest important steps taken on the earth towards moral and spiritual progress, by openly recognizing the utmost fallacy and misapplication of Churchianism. (*Faint organ sounds*).

Described scenes appear upon curtain followed by two half-moons representing typical orthodox faces of man and woman, fronting each other; a moment later two full-moon faces of same character, each differently hued, expressing disappointment become visible.

REGINA.—Look, other Satellites! Now we may soon meet some lonesome giants floating through this chilling clerical night air, as they are constantly chasing each other in dark space.

ALBERT.—What marvels there are in our planetary system! If mortals had even a faint notion of the simplest laws of evolution.—Alas! Most important knowledge about Nature became lost in the fierce religious struggles of remote centuries, while modern science is in many respects still in its infancy.

FELICIA.—You are right, although not only science but every department of legal vice and wholesale fraud has successfully

been pointed down to certain strict formulas, called christian civilization. There are absurd rules for everything, making it impossible for even the clearest heads to follow their own rational ideas; thus people are born, raised, and die automatons since few are able, under prevailing conditions, to take lessons from Nature, or would consider christianity as the sublime doctrine of love, without which it is a cruel farce, much worse than paganism; the latter destroying occasionally human life, the former killing souls by the millions not even sparing the most helpless innocent little ones.

(The five satellites are moving and giant master Jexidrol slowly descending from Titan appears first very small, rapidly increases until presenting himself to the size of eight feet, stationery floats in mid air his solemn half-moon face constantly turned towards Titan rests upon a long thin neck, decorated with large rosary beads; arms form bat-like wings, body ending in a long stout fish tail; all brilliantly colored; wings and tail in constant motion, also changing hue; Jexidrol without having been observed falls in with his deep voice.

JEXIDROL.—This obscurity is soon to give way to original human spirit as made after the image of God.—Prince Albert pursued the only proper course in establishing a regenerated Christian family club, by which real happiness and sound morals are attained in strict conformity with the unalterable theology of human nature.

LUCIA.—Verily, our brother recognized that men must not live like wild and ferocious animals in their unaccessible mountain dens, he founded therefore beautiful Merced Farm upon the most charming and useful principles of social co-operation, as sister Mabel advised him to do. He is now, Master Jexidrol, thoroughly qualified to receive his last heavenly mission.

Three new satellites appear; the first of oriental features; next a revolving tabor; thirdly, a four-winged star, showing a monk's purple face—each three feet diameter.

MABEL.—(*Pointing upwards*) The last satellites, heaven's guards and crow scares.

JEXIDROL.—Prince of Venus; you are welcomed in all spheres! Who should not be pleased with your earthly career? The gates of heaven will fly open, whenever such be your desire, it is however the ardent wish of souls in the whole universe, that you should return to continue on earth your invaluable services of forming and establishing also in cities such model family clubs, as has been successfully organized at Salton Lake.—Gather despairing men and friendless yearning women, all need a kind word, a loving heart, a human home.

You may now start without delay at the great metropolis under the flaming torch of liberty, where for years past the good Genii have been preparing a solid foundation for the gigantic

light-house whose rays are to guide in future the ill-fated crafts of all nations during their most perilous voyages through the dark and stormy oceans of social misery.

ALBERT.—I am ready to return and will do my utmost to comply with this universal desire.

JEXIDROL.—We thank you sincerely my dear Prince, there is not the slightest doubt that immediate success will at last crown our combined efforts.—I am sorry that we are unable to offer you greater attractions in our monotonous planet.

ALBERT.—Master Jexidrol! Are you not suffering and worrying on account of the extreme monotony here?

JEXIDROL.—Not at all, as there are nine hundred billion giant souls in Saturn, all very busy and anxiously guarding for the progress and salvation of each other, this being what we so utterly neglected while on earth. Of course, now we know nothing about religious, national, or other hatreds, since social conveniences by articulation are denied us, in order to make us susceptible for more intelligent thought and actions than incrusting temple whisperings; though as a due compensation for useful works really performed, we can in many parts of our planet avoid the toils of gravity, enabling us thus to visit at pleasure our Satellites, and the great puzzle of earthly scientists, our magnificent musical ring.

ALBERT.—I see you enjoy great advantages over ordinary beings. Do you also receive tidings from other planets besides the speaking tower of Titan?

JEXIDROL.—Yes, some times from comets; most of them call here on their journeys for a fresh supply of atmosphere, when they good-naturedly tell us all what they have seen in their eternal flights.

ALBERT.—They must be excellent spies. I have frequently thought of securing one of those slick fellows for the sake of making a spherical journey.

MABEL.—My brother; that would never work, because no comet could ever penetrate the dense earth-atmosphere; but human beings may soon enough be enabled to make heavenly trips in a similar fashion to that, in which we are travelling.

ALBERT.—And in what particular fashion is it that we are travelling?

QUEEN.—(*astonished*) Ah, my Prince! You ought to have found that out long ago; why, without flesh, we carry no weighty bodies since we advanced by personal efforts so far as to penetrate space with our free souls!

REGINA.—You will understand this better when your liberated soul becomes again encased in its earthly envelope.

FELICIA.—Nature's fast mail service of soul acts with mathematical precision, your's representing simply a planets round trip soul.

Soft organ sounds; Saturn's ring becomes faintly visible as a broad semicircle. Albert confused.

LUCIA.—(*Pointing to ring.*) Do not get downhearted dear brother; look at this beautiful light!

ALBERT.—(*Admiringly.*) Wonderful!

FAIRIES.—(*In chorus.*) Let us listen to Saturn's concert!

The 8 satelites each one handling a musical instrument are again plainly visible. Party sitting down, while ring under increasing sounds becomes plainer, falling in of other instruments; fairies above stage accompanying softly Saturn's rustling, while Jexidrol turns graceful somersaults, and the ring displays rapid chromatrophe colors. After repeating this performance, colors of ring die slowly out, leaving a deep yellow iris.

JEXIDROL.—The ring is complete, and that concludes the concert.

ALBERT.—Who produced those melodious sounds?

MABEL.—They are produced by nature my brother; magnetic currents coming in contact with the satellites furnish the high notes; the 45 rings, each 1000 kilometers wide give the principal air of comon sense, while the planet itself emits deep bass.

QUEEN.—The rising or setting of the rings form electro-magnetic currents in all conceivable variations, the result of which is the celestial music that we heard.

JEXIDROL.—Those sounds are at certain localities so intense that no human ear could bear them, while the vibrations become like those of tremendous earthquakes, causing most exciting scenes by shooting us thousands of miles into gloomy space, where we continue chasing each other behind the immense steeple of Titan or into the deepest shades of our orthodox Satellites. Thus you will observe my Prince, how we have found glory, according to our physical and mental condition, being content to have it no worse, since we were taught no better.

Two more giants resembling Jexidrol descend from satellites, appearing small at that distance, assuming when close to stage floor their normal size, shooting towards satellites again diminish, while turning swift somersaults, changing in this manner repeatedly size, position and color. Albert greatly astonished strokes the back of his head, while Jexidrol joins in his companions' sport.

ALBERT.—Oh, the conceited mortals! What limited ideas they have; and how insignificant a planet is the earth. What undreamed marvels I have seen, and still how much more remains hidden from my knowledge!

REGINA.—Indeed, such is the case. Nature's remotest secrets are only accessible to perfect spirits, which state no soul can ever acquire by religious display and prayer, but only by diligent research and study of Nature's manifestations, never stopping even at the insignificant occurrence known as death.

ALBERT.—I observe Giant Master, that Saturn soul's almost reached that advanced spiritual state, and I really wonder under what conditions they came here.

JEXIDROL.—We came all the same way, dear Prince, passing like you through Jupiter; Christ could not even take any exceptions in universal laws and destiny, while cunning doctrines propagating selfish superiority are the most infamous blasphemies which could not fail to exert its paralyzing reaction as we find it presently all over the civilized world. Every soul is only received according to individual merits.

We Saturnians worked deservedly, and spend our spare time in nothing worse, than in imitating such brazen mockeries as religion demanded of us; every one after his special creed, but we seldom paid much attention to our brethren's misery, and still less to Nature's overpowering truth; consequently here we are detained for many centuries to learn what we neglected to acquire with our human reason while on earth.

ALBERT.—(*addressing fairies*). Have mortals always been mistaken like this?

FELICIA.—As to that, dear brother, you only need to consult the history of some ancient nations; their systems of public education, religious as well as social conditions, and the contrary will irresistibly impress itself upon your perplexed mind; it can be therefore no wonder that unhappy planets receive now such enormous enforcements of ill-guided delinquents, while but few souls reach Venus and Saturn.

LUCIA.—Alas! Such pitiful condition is hardly ever noticed by fashionable heedless society, who is too busily engaged with its intricate suction pumps, which driven by electric, steam and white slave's brain power racingly eject worn out animals, compelling them to either starve or steal.

QUEEN.—(*menacingly*) The moral state of all those, who are responsible for earthly misery is far below the level of the lowest animal souls; even though they be religious or public leaders, hence, soon enough they will meet their just deserts in far off Uranus or Neptune.

ALBERT.—It must be awful dark and cold in those distant planets.

JEXIDROL.—Indeed, so it is! All beings of corresponding character are despairing in its desolate plains and deep oceans.

ALBERT.—Oh, the unfortunates must suffer there a conti-

nuous agonizing death! (*imploring upon his knees*) How can I thank my kind, dear sisters for having saved me in time?

MABEL.—(*raising him with both hands*) You have deserved many times what has been done in your behalf dear brother; or you would still be whirling around in terrific Jupiter like millions of idle loungers, who are supposed to learn first of all the law of motion, while those, who have been unfriendly and spiteful must find in Mars a chance to fight out their earthly differences, where they get mercilessly trashed, as soon as they lift a hand or curl their lips.

SCENE II.

WAR IN MARS.

Satellites and giants move perceptibly upwards, rapidly diminishing in size until invisible. Fairies and Albert spread out their arms as if flying with closed eyes; suddenly heavy strokes of tabor and cymbals; Mar's sons appear marching in single files, left hand buried in each preceding man's red wig; with the right administering heavy blows upon front man's shoulders, simultaneously advancing one pace at each bum of tabor, which is followed by two clicks of cymbals with corresponding two hearty wig pulls and graceful knee bends of Mars' sons, who also amuse themselves by quickly turning their vicious faces amid whizzing whiplashes back and sideways in disdain and utmost defiance; red fires blazing in the rear.

All are decorated with long noses, large red whiskers, green helmets and wearing short greek skirts, striped dark brown and pearl gray; ties, sleeves and collars striped green and gold.

Suddenly unharmonious beatings of cymbals and tabors put Mars' sons and fairies to flight. Intense darkness.

SCENE III.

NEPTUNE'S OCEAN.

Albert and fairies find themselves soon again perched upon an icy cliff, surrounded by dark surging waves; howling and whizzing storm flapping their gowns, when suddenly a ghostly form wrapped in a dark cloak appears from beneath the waves, shaking and swaying to and fro.

ALBERT.—(*horrified*) My mother! My mother!

(*Mother, in a hollow voice*) No more your mother, but a self punished siren of Neptune's inky black ocean. I was never qualified to be a mother; if it was but for me, you would still be, where you saw your brother George. (*Despondently*) Oh, Albert! Teachers and particularly mothers are responsible for souls' misery, all down at the bottom of this gloomy ocean (*pointing with right hand downwards*) from whence we endeavor in indescribable sorrow to make good our fearful wrongs, whenever rare opportunities favor us in doing so.

No amount of compunction can, but actual reparation will

finally deliver us. Oh, how hopeless a task when once the dark line is reached from which there is no turning back! (*with renewed viyor*) Do you remember the ugly reptile in the dark canyon?

It was your mother;—

Charley may deplore that event, others generally curse such apparent calamities; your experience however teaches you better, and all believers in antiquated mythology are becoming gradually but surely better-informed.

There will exist no longer gods nor men, possessed of supernatural curative, clairvoyant, rapping and other mystic powers to mislead and defraud awe-stricken, and superstitious victims.—Why occur adversities, failures and accidents? Ah! Thoughtless pupils will seldom question the why.—

Don't you know how badly they are needed to lend negligent humanity a sense of stern reality; such is the sad duty of Uranus, greys and Neptune's sirens.

ALBERT.—(*moved*) Can I do anything for you mother?

MOTHER.—No Albert, nothing for me, since I am only a drop in this immense ocean; individual favoritism ceases at the moment when soul becomes liberated from earthly corruption; thus whatever you do shall be done for humanity, and when mortals begin to appreciate your example thoroughly, we will all enjoy it.

You also know that there are hundreds of dear relatives and friends to every earthly squatter sorely waiting to be redeemed; although they see that it could never be accomplished by leisurely parading church habitues. (*Deep pause and loud splashing of waters*).

ALBERT.—Oh, could I only save them at once!

MOTHER.—Patience Albert, patience! The highest mountain waters become torpid on their long journey through attractive valleys before the shining sea can be reached, from whence the sun raises them, and travelling thousands of miles back again, they are able to kiss mother earth as invigorating rain or sparkling dew; such being the cycle of soul in its natural orbit.

Return then, among the high buzzing hives of modern cities, call human attention to the orderly citizenship of ants, bees, and other low animals, their equal privileges for queen and laborers, and compare their morals with those of the ever stinging bees, who build proud steeples and elegant pulpits, and who claim all soul and divine spirit for themselves.

Let them establish institutions where children could be protected from the dangerous influence of weak-minded mothers, who as steady as they are in nursing their babies will studiously spoil them after that duty of nature has ceased.

Old and young equally need as much instruction, while self-conceited talkers, presumptive copyists and shadows of scientists would do better to scatter all over the fields and watch a wheat's growth. After that the world will become wise enough to open church and prison doors; if not to coax culprits into prayer, so at least to offer them desirable and beneficial surroundings, as most of them have never had a pleasant home, while God is too high above all human roofs as to look favorably upon luxuriously dressed, well fed idolators.

Electric light raised upon the swaying form whose cloak appears whitened with ice and foam; strong gusts of wind.

Ask money kings what they intend to do with their mammon. Their being no merit in charitable bequests, since earthly treasures are to them an absolute void as soon as the horrid fall into space commenced. They only seek distinction among fellow-men. Why then not give them more of it than they could ever buy? Erect them statues, call them fathers, and they will readily found yourredeeming family clubs.

There are many solid buildings admirably adapted to promote everywhere precisely such genuine christianity, while the wives and daughters of real benefactors instead of attending to their customary useless sunday exaltations, will visit hospitals, asylums and tenements, which would have magical effects upon many a lonely sufferer, as well as upon their own fashionably diseased souls; should but there still remain religious scoffers, take them all out into the mountains where you can show them the bright azure dome above, the green fields below and the silvery ocean bordering the distant horizon, then ask them if God's own temple was not good enough for all. Do not forget to remind them how flowers, birds, and insects delight to worship and how we are to take lessons from such lovely creatures. Make them throw out their orthodox ballast, which prevents soul from rising into higher spheres, until then farewell.

Wind gust; splashing waters swallow the form.

(*Planet curtain.*)



ACT V.

S C E N E I.

Venus scene as in act III; but pyramidal mountain appears now immensely high, and glitters like gold. Beautiful floral and fruit garland-decorations; upon the ground some extra large flowers; dazzling golden light.

ALBERT.—(*rubbing his eyes*) The light here is almost blinding after coming from dark spheres. (*turning towards Mabel*). Now, tell me my sister, how many years is it since you called me from Merced Farm? Oh, I feel it must be an awful long time!

MABEL.—(*uncertain*) How shall I describe you time?

We'll say three thousand years.

ALBERT.—(*startled steps backwards.*) 3,000 years? Oh, three thousand years! And what is the total distance we have traversed in that long time?

QUEEN.—Little over ten billion kilometers; though you can as yet hardly form a correct idea about time, distance and velocity. You will understand this better when you reach the earth again.

Buzzing, hissing, then thundering sounds. Mysterious movement of mountain, the top of which enlivens with numberless whitish streaks of lightning. Albert frightened; merry laughter all around.

ALBERT.—What is that coming now?

REGINA.—You will see in a minute.

Heavy falling of yellow snow; Genii and fairies lustily throwing at each other yellow balls.

ALBERT.—(*laughs relieved*) Ah, how beautiful is golden snow! Is there also winter here?

REGINA.—We have as on Earth, and in Mars varying seasons and climates; there is but little difference in the physical condition of the three planets, and their respective inhabitants. You see (*pointing to mountain*) Violentinal, our largest volcano is throwing snow to form a protecting warm cloud all through the cold season. If it were not for this fifty kilometer high mountain, we should certainly have now instead of flowers and green fields, a benumbing glacial temperature, while according to earthly reckoning 115 days later all would burn to ashes.

ALBERT.—And what can the volcano do to avert the suffocating summer heat?

FELICIA.—When the Sun's rays strike us perpendicularly the sea is bodily lifted and passing through volcanos, water is being ejected many miles into the air, and thus immense crystal domes are formed, each one refreshing the ground for hundreds of kilometers.

ALBERT.—What a wonderful country this is; if human beings could know of such marvels, they would undoubtedly take more interest in nature. But what will they say if I tell them all that I have seen? Very likely I should be considered demented or an impostor.

LUCIA.—Verily, human-sheep have been taught to ridicule, and condemn all that goes beyond their limited power of judgment and predominating idolatry; but since most sensible and honest teachers became aware of the fact, that in spite of all religious display and moonshine-nonsense; common sense is rapidly gaining headway, many of them are getting prepared to exchange ineffective creeds for honorable tactics, and practical demonstrations.

MABEL.—You heeded my brother, the valuable hints I gave you at the midnight interview, and from that very day you rose in the estimation of all who previously despised you. Tell your experience to those who are in command of elegant, but unutilized palaces all over the world. Induce them to keep open such buildings, as have been erected to practice, instead of vainly discussing christian examples beneath there costly archways.

QUEEN.—You would do well to glorify noble ministers, who will readily dedicate their hearts, and churches for the actual welfare of ideal christian families. Let the poor stray children no longer be driven away by mysterious, unrealized doctrines of past centuries. Build monuments for great souls who have the courage to conquer themselves and their evil passion for earthly possessions; tell them to do less idle talking, less business, but considerably more actual work.

Flowers continue, each one saying a word and gracefully bowing.

Tell them to unite, to think, pity, admire, and love; to be kind, truthful and modest, like civilized christians; like human beings in a most beautiful planet.

ALBERT.—(astonished, turns about.) Who was that talking?

FAIRIES and GENII.—(in chorus) Sweet flowers, souls of Venus, my prince!

ALBERT. Do flowers in Venus talk?

FAIRIES.—Yes, they do; earthly flowers can also talk.

REGINA.—The sweetest discourse in the softest voices comes from them; earthly flowers can see and feel; they are

observant fairies and genii of Venus, always gladdening noble hearts, inspiring gently human beings, and gratefully helping those who love and cherish them.

FELICIA.—You see, my brother, we cannot, except under very rare conditions, show ourselves on earth in our real and natural films, since mortals become scornful or frightened and superstitious; thus sectual agitators and professional deceivers would only be benefited by such experiments. Earth's denizens are entirely too void of higher feelings to appreciate our self-sacrificing favors; we prefer therefore to see them undisturbed in their burlesque sadducism, until absolute failure and awakening conscience will lead their very divided attentions back again to the only faithful parent and goddess... Nature.

ALBERT.—Now I begin to fully understand the secret of mind's transmission, and I perceive soul in whispering flowers, rustling leaves and murmuring mountain springs, indeed, in all and everything. Oh, how often did I admire the mysterious power of soul in nature! I received daily high and grand inspirations by sincerely communicating my own inmost thoughts with this sublime spirit, the only infallible scriptures of God.

LUCIA.—And that is the only correct way to reach heavenly spheres, my dear brother.

MABEL.—(*Poniting upwards*).—True scriptures are found in nature, nature is heavenly spirit, spirit is soul, soul is love, love is God, and God is Nature.

QUEEN.—Begin wherever you may choose and you are bound to arrive at the same spot. Such is the supreme truth, which ignominous and cunningly devised orthodoxy successfully kept for so many centuries shut out from human minds.

But there is no way of opposing Nature's sublime laws, however hard it had been attempted by fanatics of all creeds.

Let therefore, overtoppling humanity first of all return to intelligible simplicity, while knavish priesthood could under present conditions do no better, than strike out with others for fresh air, for free nature, for the top of their steep hills. Why not disinfect all theological dark cells with practical, clear shining religion?

GENI.—(*offering to shake hands with Albert.*) Recognize me Albert, I am John your earthly father!— Now, we are brothers. Oh, how I suffered since I left you in atonement for having neglected to facilitate you a rational education! I was one-sided, as parents generally are, either showing brutish passion or nourishing a demented desire to see their children comfortable and happy for the time being, quite regardless of reason and careless of the child's future as well as unmindful of other children's oppression.

REGINA.—Naturally millions of properly called civilized brutes are raised into selfish-cruel fiends, when they ought to be children of one father, and of one creation.

JOHN.—I have found it out too late, and had therefore to undergo severe punishment, although the fault rested principally with our stubborn instructors and in a defective public education.

LUDOVINA.—(*12 years old, dressed white; green and gold trimmed, comes up to kiss Albert innocently.*) How is Aunt Mary, dear brother?

ALBERT.—(*Perplexed*) I don't remember of ever having seen your good aunt, my dear angel.

LUDOVINA.—(*with a melancholy but winning smile*) Why, I am Ludovina, poor Nellie's sister! I came, as you know to Venus with Mother Lucia when I knew little about the world. (*Imploringly*) Still I remember Nellie. Oh, won't you please tell her that whenever she kisses the first flower that greets her in her morning strolls, she will have kissed me, and the pearléd dew upon that very flower shall be my tears of joy!

How many unfortunate flowers know only tears of sorrow as they fade away unobserved, unloved, and untouched by sympathizing lips, although thousands of thoughtless mortals pass them haughtily every day?

But they have no time, as time to them is money; they have no sympathy, because it sells too well for money; they have no conscience because two effective remedies have been invented to prevent this inconvenience.—Women find it in churches, and men in saloons or clubs; thus religious and liquor-spirits are the great rivaling forces between which planet earth revolves. Nevertheless it is written in the great book of nature that the earth should revolve around neither, subsequently humanity shall be compelled to seek for original force, which is divine spirit such as becomes manifested by common sense (*smilingly bows*).

You may think dear brother that I am wise for my size, but you know, wisdom is never measured in Venus with rule in hand, as is practised on earth. We have here neither books, colleges nor churches; since there is only one author and one book of universal wisdom,

Turning and with a triumphant movement of hand towards the horizon.

As you see; it contains however millions of leaves which we read with due attention, while flashy mortals hardly ever trouble to take a glance of its title page, tearing instead blindly about its gilded edges.

Bows gracefully and merrily laughing, dances childishly away; throwing back kisses.

ALBERT.—(*In anguish*) Oh God! Will not all on earth have changed from the day I came to Venus? How wicked of me! I have hardly given a thought to my poor family, my dear wife and children have gone perhaps long since to Uranus or Neptune.

FELICIA.—We never worry in Venus for any particular person, having the universal desire to save them all without exception. Don't forget this first christian rule, my dear brother!

LUCIA.—Earthly faults and sentiments are reclaiming our brother because he is to return to the earth; but he will soon get over it.

MABEL.—Of course, he will remain firm to the end, was even Christ at frequent occasions subject to similar human weakness.

QUEEN.—Now, dear brother, do not worry about anything, you shall leave us this very instant.

ALBERT.—Oh, how tired I am! And the crown is so awfully heavy! (*feeling it with both hands*.)

REGINA. (*Kindly*) Be seated, dear brother; on earth I was your tending grand-mother. I will now just as carefully guard you from discomfort.

Albert seats himself upon flowers, large gentle looking animals emerge from the sea, fairies pet them. Albert indicating direction, while court ladies approach quietly to take his crown and cloak; he shuts his eyes.

FELICIA.—Consult your mirror; it will relieve you while arrangements are being made for your departure.

ALBERT.—(*taking out the mirror revolves it and court ladies retire few paces. Albert enthusiastically exclaims*) Oh, how lovely! How sweet! There is Merced Farm on Salton Lake... But what is that?.... (*feeling his head*). Mary, my dear wife, kneels in front of my cot, and she is weeping, — at least she is alive; but on the cot... a corpse!... (*jumping up*). A corpse... yes, is it her second husband? (*saddened and sitting down again*) Oh, my God! It is my own corpse... and there in the middle of the room is Emily, — poor heart is crying bitterly... that is too much, indeed! (*he faints*)

Home sweet home faintly. Court ladies motionless; fairies exit. Lights low. Blue flames and smoke screen the removal of decorations, and Albert's; rustling sounds. Back curtain rising discloses scene of the familiar farm room, with Mary seated in front of cot and Emily kneeling in the middle of room, Edward seated near window, with a book in hand. Nellie just entering when Albert awakes, and without noticing any one.

ALBERT.—Where am I, Mabel dear sister?

MARY.—(*lovingly*) Don't be disturbed; you are home, dear Albert, and out of all danger.

ALBERT.—(*jumps up*) What's that? Out of all danger and you here, Mary, in Venus?

MARY.—(*sadly, and sitting him on cot*) Calm yourself, dear Albert; do you suppose I would leave you alone for a single moment?

ALBERT.—(*calmed*) How many centuries, have you then been with me, Mary?

MARY.—(*painfully smiling*) Indeed, hours seemed centuries to me, when the physicians said that there was no hope of recovery, after Charley confessed that you had hardly tasted the whiskey which he was trying to make you swallow and thus you remained for fully 30 hours like dead.

ALBERT.—(*pressing hands upon temple*) 30 hours? (*stammering*) Thir....ty.... hou....rs... for three thousand years with Mabel!

MARY.—Very likely she gave you three thousand years of pleasure for the thirty hours she called you away.—She also gave me three thousand years, and knows that they were for me but anguish and misery; still I became firmly convinced, that it tended to some good. Now, tell me all about it, dear Albert. No,no! You are too weak; better lie down until I bring you something to eat.

ALBERT.—Don't trouble Mary, I am feeling well enough, there was nothing the matter with me. Mabel took me only along to let me see the wonders of far off worlds, enabling me thusly to bring rationalism into this wicked world, such as partly existed already over three thousand years ago.

Neither am I the only soul which was permitted to wander, beyond the dark line and come back again to reveal souls' marvelous transition and its varying manifestations in nature.

Every individual may likewise do it, as soon as fashionable absurdities are being exchanged for sober and modest ways of living.

Farmers filing in, as at end of 2d Act; Charley and Florence leading.

CHARLEY.—(*tapping Albert's shoulder*) You are right, Albert; but do you suppose that confounded towns people will ever abandon their murky atmosphere? (*shaking his finger*) Never, unless we farmers put the head-lights of common sense and progress at each side of the endangered ship of human society.

Then intelligent pilots may appear who will at last be able to steer the frail vessel after centuries of dangerous cruising in shallow turpid waters once more safely into port.

TABLEAU.

Lights low; raised back curtain discloses N. Y. harbor; rays of the torch of Liberty, showing the year 1892 illuminate the eastern hemisphere of a large globe, while a vessel bearing the desirable mottos

“Common Sense” and “Progress” in flaming letters, approaches slowly; group of children upon a platform, support from poles Chinese lanterns showing the year 1901, while a tent amidst a group of camping Indians shows 1492.

FLORENCE.—Hurrah for Albert!

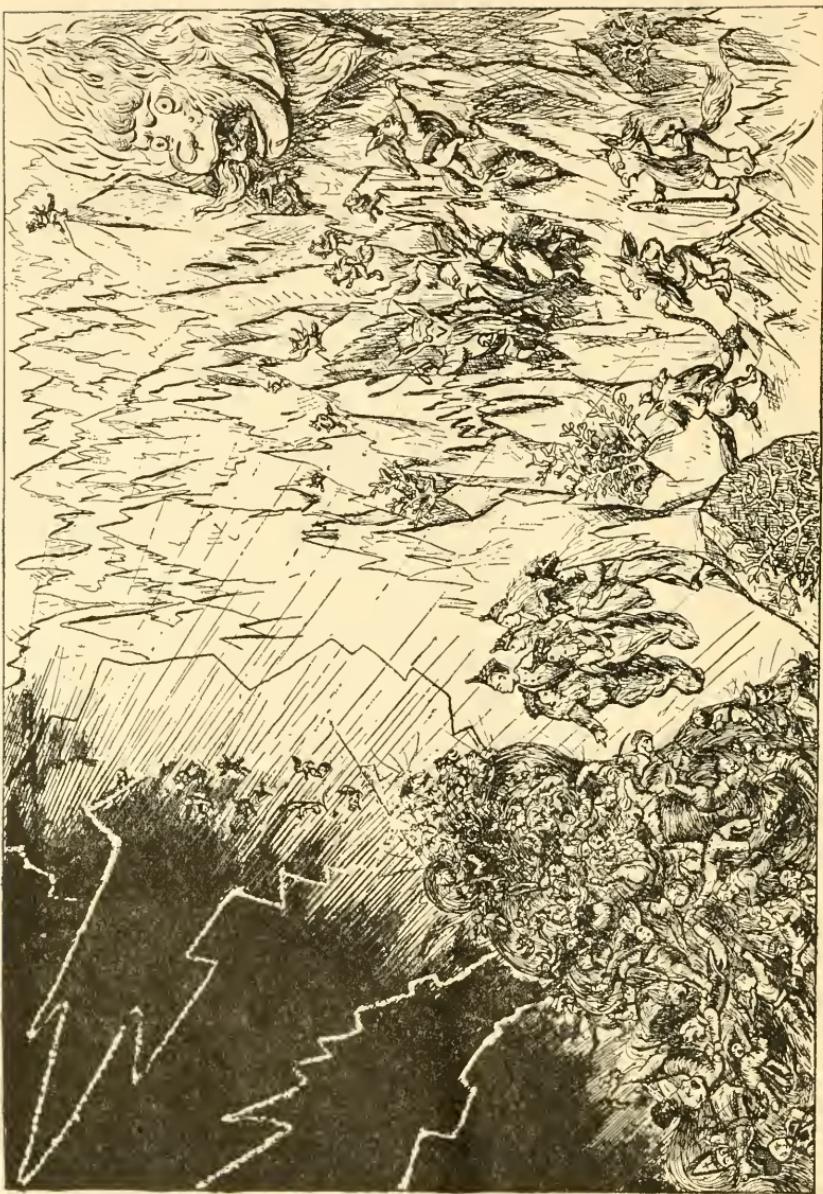
MARY.—Hurrah for the United States!

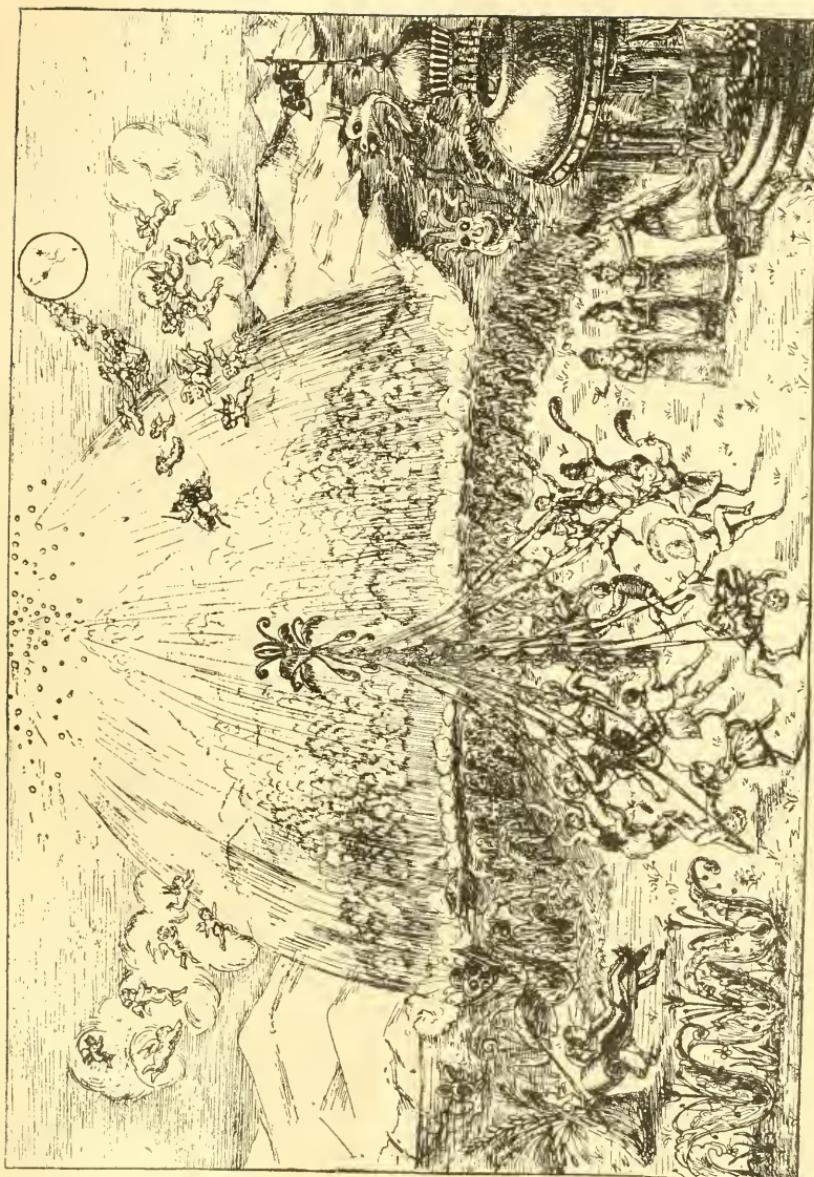
NELLIE.—Hurrah for New York!

(Curtain. “*The Star Spangled Banner*”)



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